

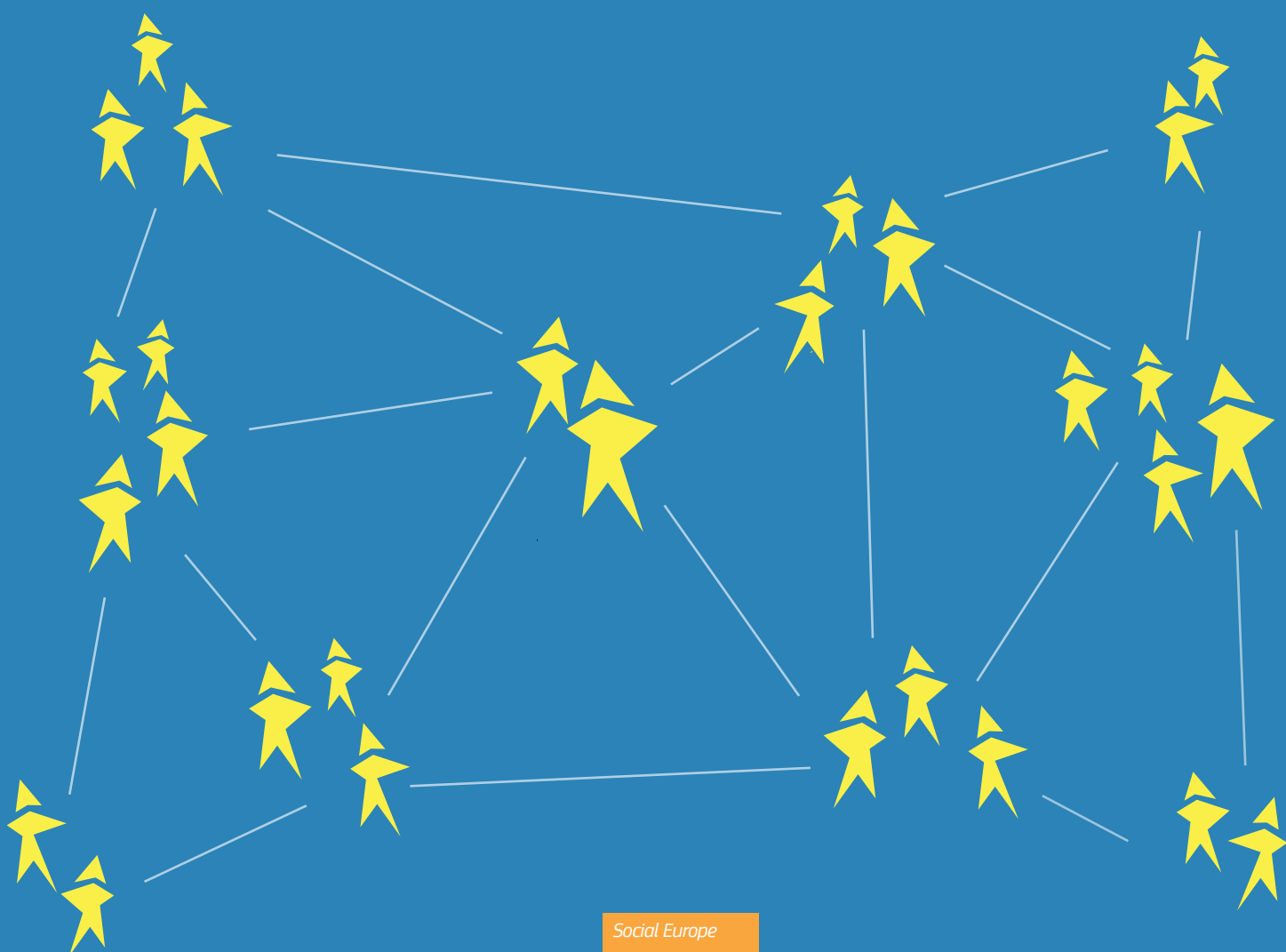


EUROPEAN SOCIAL POLICY NETWORK (ESPN)

Social protection for people with disabilities

North Macedonia

Maja Gerovska Mitev



Social Europe

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Directorate D — Social Rights and Inclusion
Unit D.2 — Social Protection

Contact: Flaviana Teodosiu

E-mail: flaviana.teodosiu@ec.europa.eu

*European Commission
B-1049 Brussels*

European Social Policy Network (ESPN)

ESPN Thematic Report on Social protection for people with disabilities

North Macedonia

2022

Maja Gerovska Mitev

Institute for Social Work and Social Policy

Faculty of Philosophy, Ss. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje

The European Social Policy Network (ESPN) was established in July 2014 on the initiative of the European Commission to provide high-quality and timely independent information, advice, analysis and expertise on social policy issues in the European Union and neighbouring countries.

The ESPN brings together into a single network the work that used to be carried out by the European Network of Independent Experts on Social Inclusion, the Network for the Analytical Support on the Socio-Economic Impact of Social Protection Reforms (ASISP) and the MISSOC (Mutual Information Systems on Social Protection) secretariat.

The ESPN is managed by the Luxembourg Institute of Socio-Economic Research (LISER) and APPLICA, together with the European Social Observatory (OSE).

For more information on the ESPN, see: <http://ec.europa.eu/socialmain.jsp?catId=1135&langId=en>

LEGAL NOTICE

The information and views set out in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official opinion of the European Union. Neither the European Union institutions and bodies nor any person acting on their behalf may be held responsible for the use which may be made of the information contained therein. More information on the European Union is available on the Internet (<http://www.europa.eu>).

Manuscript completed in September 2022

The European Commission is not liable for any consequence stemming from the reuse of this publication.
Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union, 2022

© European Union, 2022



The reuse policy of European Commission documents is implemented by the Commission Decision 2011/833/EU of 12 December 2011 on the reuse of Commission documents (OJ L 330, 14.12.2011, p. 39). Except otherwise noted, the reuse of this document is authorised under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC-BY 4.0) licence (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>). This means that reuse is allowed provided appropriate credit is given and any changes are indicated.

For any use or reproduction of elements that are not owned by the European Union, permission may need to be sought directly from the respective rightholders.

QUOTING THIS REPORT

Gerovska Mitev, Maja (2022). *ESPN Thematic Report on Social protection for people with disabilities – North Macedonia*, European Social Policy Network (ESPN), Brussels: European Commission.

CONTENTS

SUMMARY.....	4
1 ACCESS TO DISABILITY-SPECIFIC INCOME SUPPORT	5
1.1 Disability-specific benefits/pensions available to working-age people	5
1.1.1 <i>Права на парична помош од социјална заштита за возрастни лица со попреченост – неповрзани со боречко-инвалидска заштита</i> (Benefits from the social protection system not related to military service or war)	5
1.1.1.1 <i>Надоместок заради попреченост</i> (Disability allowance).....	5
1.1.1.2 <i>Надоместок за помош и нега од друго лице</i> (Allowance for assistance and care from another person)	7
1.1.1.3 <i>Инвалидска пензија</i> (Disability pension)	8
1.1.2 <i>Боречко-инвалидска заштита</i> (Benefits related to military service or war)....	10
1.1.2.1 <i>Лична инвалиднина</i> (Personal disability allowance)	10
1.1.2.2 <i>Семејна инвалиднина и зголемена семејна инвалиднина</i> (Family disability allowance and increased family disability allowance)	11
1.1.2.3 <i>Инвалидски додаток</i> (Disability supplement)	12
1.1.2.4 <i>Додаток за нега и помош од друго лице</i> (Supplement for care and assistance by another person)	13
1.1.2.5 <i>Ортопедски додаток</i> (Orthopaedic allowance)	14
1.1.2.6 <i>Цивилна инвалиднина</i> (Civil disability allowance).....	15
1.1.2.7 <i>Додаток за нега и помош од друго лице</i> (Supplement for care and assistance by another person)	16
1.2 Disability-specific old-age pension schemes	16
1.3 Income support aimed at covering disability-related healthcare and housing expenses	16
1.3.1 Healthcare.....	17
1.3.1.1 <i>Право на здравствена заштита</i> (Right to health protection).17	
1.3.1.2 <i>Право на ослободување од плаќање партиципација за здравствено услуги и лекови</i> (Fee waiver for health services and medicines).....	17
1.3.2 Housing.....	17
1.3.2.1 <i>Додаток за домување</i> (Housing allowance).....	17
2 ACCESS TO SOME KEY GENERAL SOCIAL PROTECTION CASH BENEFITS.....	18
2.1 Old-age benefits.....	18
2.1.1 <i>Старосна пензија</i> (Old-age pension)	18
2.1.2 <i>Семејна пензија</i> (Family pension)	18
2.2 Unemployment benefits.....	19
2.2.1 <i>Паричен надоместок во случај на невработеност</i> (Unemployment compensation).....	19
2.3 Guaranteed minimum income schemes and other social assistance benefits.....	19
2.3.1 <i>Гарантирана минимална помош</i> (Guaranteed minimum assistance).....	19
2.3.2 <i>Парична помош за социјална сигурност за старите лица</i> (Cash benefit for social security for older people)	20
3 PROVISION OF ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY AND PERSONAL ASSISTANCE.....	20
4 NATIONAL DEBATES, REFORMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	21
4.1 National debates	21
4.2 Recent reforms and reforms currently in the pipeline	21
4.3 Good practice and recommendations on how to tackle gaps and obstacles.....	22
REFERENCES	23

Summary

This report analyses some important cash and in-kind social protection provisions available to adults with disabilities (i.e. aged 18 or above). There are other important provisions available to them in other areas not covered in this report. In line with Article 1 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), “people with disabilities” should be understood as “those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others”.

Provision of cash and in-kind social protection for adults with disabilities in North Macedonia has improved since mid-2019, after the implementation of the social protection reform. This has brought improvements related to: universalisation of the *Надоместок заради попреченост* (disability allowance) (i.e. removal of income-testing); disregarding of disability allowances when calculating the values of other benefits; introduction of personal assistants; introduction of a new assessment model based on the international classification of functioning, disability and health; and expanding community-based services to provide families with support. However, other important laws that deal with the rights of people with disabilities (i.e. the Law on Employment of People with Disabilities, and the Law on Pension and Disability Insurance) have not been reformed, thus hindering a more holistic improvement of the legal treatment of people with disabilities.

Non-contributory disability-specific income support comprises two main disability cash benefits: the disability allowance and the *Надоместок за помош и нега од друго лице* (allowance for assistance and care from another person). These can also be topped up with other non-disability income support, such as the *Гарантирана минимална помош* (guaranteed minimum assistance), and the *Парична помош за социјална сигурност за старите лица* (cash benefit for social security for older people). Despite the improvement in the value of the disability benefits in recent years, there are still challenges related to their accessibility. The process for obtaining the medical proofs needed for the disability allowance is long and tiresome, which prevents many people with disabilities from accessing these social protection rights.

Contributory disability-specific income support consists of the *Инвалидска пензија* (disability pension). The main challenge related to access to this benefit is the control examination. Citizens with reduced work capacity who have received a temporary disability pension face a big challenge if, during the control examination, the commission changes its assessment and establishes that they are fit for work.

There are also several disability benefits linked to military service or war. These are more numerous than regular disability benefits; however, there is no publicly available research related to gaps and challenges in access to these benefits.

Disability-specific health or housing protection is not available.

Although not systematic, national debates related to access to social protection by people with disabilities contribute towards raising awareness about existing challenges in access to the social protection system faced by (specific groups of) people with disabilities, and often lead to improvements in their treatment. Adequacy issues are also part of these occasional debates, particularly in relation to policy initiatives for a better balance between disability allowances and the take-up of social services for people with disabilities.

The report suggests several recommendations for tackling gaps and obstacles in social protection for the adults with disabilities, including: removing the age limit of 65 associated with the disability allowance and the allowance for assistance and care from another person; improving the physical accessibility of all centres for social work, as well as electronic access for people with disabilities (blind, deaf, physical disability, etc.); and making use of good practice in social protection for other vulnerable groups (i.e. Roma health mediators) and tailoring them to the needs of people with disabilities.

1 Access to disability-specific income support

Section 1 maps and assesses the *disability-specific* cash benefits and pensions in North Macedonia that are of a contributory and non-contributory character.

1.1 Disability-specific benefits/pensions available to working-age people

This section describes disability-specific benefits/pensions for working-age people with disabilities – people who do not have a job or who are (declared) partially or totally unable to work due to disability. The benefits described under Section 1.1.1.1 and Section 1.1.1.2 (the disability allowance and the allowance for assistance and care from another person) are part of the disability assistance scheme (non-contributory benefits), whereas the benefit described under Section 1.1.1.3 (the disability pension) is part of the disability insurance scheme (contribution-based benefits).

1.1.1 *Права на парична помош од социјална заштита за возрасни лица со попреченост – неповрзани со боречко-инвалидска заштита (Benefits from the social protection system not related to military service or war)*

1.1.1.1 *Надоместок заради попреченост (Disability allowance)*

a) Eligibility conditions

Disability-related qualifying criteria: Eligible people include those with severe or profound intellectual disability; those with severe physical disability; completely blind people; and completely deaf people.

Age: The *Надоместок заради попреченост* (disability allowance) can be granted to people aged 26-65.

Nationality and/or residency: Claimants must be nationals of the Republic of North Macedonia with residence in the country. Foreign nationals with regulated residence¹ are also entitled to benefits in accordance with the Law on Social Protection and international treaties.

Waiting period: There is no formal waiting period. The waiting period depends on the availability of an appointment with the medical commission, and the time taken for a decision to be made. After the disability is certified, the centre for social work issues the decision for payment of the disability allowance.

Contributory history: None (i.e. no minimum contributory record is required).

Level of financial resources: None (i.e. the benefit is not means-tested).

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: Medical assessment of the person with disability, and a review of the existing medical documentation.

Responsible authorities: Ministry of Health, medical commission formed by the Ministry of Health.

¹ This applies to EU and non-EU nationals as well as to people with refugee status.

Method: The type and degree of disability is assessed on the basis of the international classification of functioning, disability and health of the World Health Organization.

Supporting evidence: An application is made to the centre for social work, supported by a valid ID, the opinion from the medical commission and the number of the claimant's bank account.

Assessor: Medical doctors and expert bodies established by special regulation. The disability allowance is granted on the basis of the opinion of a medical commission of at least three specialist doctors and their deputies at hospital clinics, or the opinion of a competent body that assesses the type and degree of disability. The beneficiary may undergo re-evaluations following a decision of the expert committee. Beneficiaries with permanent dependency are not subject to review.

Decision-maker: centre for social work, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Critical analysis: According to the Helsinki Committee of Human Rights in North Macedonia², the main challenges experienced by people with disabilities concerning their social protection access during the pandemic (2020-2021) were related to their incapacity to access the services of daycare centres due to the lockdown. Even after reopening, the capacity of the centres was limited, and organised transport to the centres was scarce.

Additionally, there were significant difficulties during the pandemic in collecting and renewing documents for exercising financial social protection rights; and in some cases this led to a loss of rights. In addition, media³ and anecdotal evidence suggests that many people with disabilities have lost their rights to allowances due to a lack of available appointments for disability assessments. Even before the pandemic, the process of obtaining the medical proofs needed for the disability allowance (from the specialist health commissions) was a long and tiresome procedure.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: The monthly amount of the disability allowance for a person with severe or profound intellectual disability, with severe physical disability, or a completely blind person, is MKD 7,349 (€120), which represents 49% of the minimum wage. The monthly amount of the disability allowance for a completely deaf person is MKD 4,200 (€68), which is 28% of the minimum wage.

Duration of the benefit: The duration of the benefit is linked to the duration of the need. Regular reviews are conducted when appropriate.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: The disability allowance can be combined with the *Гарантирана минимална помош* (guaranteed minimum assistance – GMA) and is not treated as income when applying the income threshold for GMA. The disability allowance cannot be combined with the disability allowances for military service or war.

Challenges: There have been public debates regarding the increase in the value of the disability allowance. At the beginning of 2022, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy indicated that it would increase the disability allowance by 15% during 2022. However, it was later announced that the increase only referred to the special allowance (disability allowance for children).

² <https://mhc.org.mk/news/10-godini-od-ratifikuwanje-na-konvencija-za-pravata-na-licata-so-poprechenost/>

³ <https://24.mk/details/stotici-gra-ani-ne-mozhat-da-dobijat-termin-za-lekarska-komisija-za-nadomest-za-nega>

1.1.1.2 Надоместок за помош и нега од друго лице (Allowance for assistance and care from another person)

a) Eligibility conditions

Disability-related qualifying criteria: Eligible people include those with moderate, severe or profound intellectual disability; people with severe physical disability; completely blind people; and people with permanent changes in their health condition who need help and care from another person in order to perform the essential activities of daily living (ADL).

There are two categories of dependency on care: i) people with a higher level of dependence are those with severe or pronounced mental disabilities, severe bodily disabilities, complete blindness, and temporary or permanent changes in the health condition, due to which they cannot perform ADL; and ii) people with a lower level of dependence are those with moderate mental disability, and those with temporary or permanent changes in their health condition who cannot perform all ADL without help and care from another person.

Age: Over 26.

Nationality and/or residency: The *Надоместок за помош и нега од друго лице* (allowance for assistance and care from another person) is available to nationals of the Republic of North Macedonia with residence in the country. Foreign nationals with regulated residence⁴ are also entitled to the allowance in accordance with the Law on Social Protection and international treaties.

Waiting period: There is no formal waiting period. The waiting period depends on the availability of an appointment with the medical commission, and the time taken for a decision to be made.

Contributory history: None (i.e. no minimum contributory record is required).

Level of financial resources: None (i.e. the benefit is not means-tested).

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: Medical assessment of the person with disability, and a review of the existing medical documentation.

Responsible authorities: Ministry of Health, medical commission formed by the Ministry of Health.

Method: Dependency is assessed by reference to the capacity of people to perform ADL autonomously – housekeeping, moving around in the home, mobility and personal hygiene – by means of specific evaluations, in particular on the basis of the international classification of functioning, disability and health (ICF) of the World Health Organization and the Barthel ADL index.

Supporting evidence: Applications to the centre for social work are supported by a valid ID, the opinion from the medical commission, and the number of the claimant's bank account.

Assessor: Medical doctors and expert bodies established by special regulation. The allowance is granted on the basis of the opinion of a medical commission consisting of at least three specialist doctors and their deputies at hospital clinics, or of a competent body that assesses the type and degree of disability. The beneficiary may undergo re-

⁴ This applies to EU and non-EU nationals as well as to people with refugee status.

evaluations following a decision of the expert committee. Beneficiaries with permanent dependency are not subject to review.

Decision-maker: Centre for social work, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Critical analysis: Please see Section 1.1.1.1.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: The amount of the allowance depends on the level of dependency of the beneficiary. People with a higher level of dependency are entitled to MKD 4,565 (€74) per month, equivalent to 31% of the minimum wage; people who have a lower level of dependency are entitled to MKD 4,039 (€66) per month, equal to 27% of the minimum wage. The level of the allowance is adjusted in line with the inflation rate in the previous year. The allowance is paid directly to the beneficiary.

Duration of the benefit: The duration of the allowance is linked to the duration of the need. Regular reviews are conducted when appropriate.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: The allowance is only available to people who cannot access this right based on other legislation (i.e. disability allowances related to military service or war).

Challenges: There have been unsuccessful calls from the civil society sector (i.e. the Republic Centre for Support of People with Intellectual Disability – PORAKA) for the level of the allowance to be equalised for all beneficiaries with disabilities, regardless of the level of dependency.

1.1.1.3 Инвалидска пензија (Disability pension)

Insured people who have general work incapacity, as well as insured people with residual work capacity who due to age are not able to perform other appropriate work with professional rehabilitation, acquire the right to the *Инвалидска пензија* (disability pension).

a) Eligibility conditions

Disability-related qualifying criteria: Disability is established where work capacity is permanently reduced by more than 50% compared with a physically and mentally healthy person of the same or similar education and abilities, due to a change in health condition (caused by either a work-related or non-work-related injury or disease), which cannot be reversed by medical treatment or rehabilitation. There are two categories of disability for insured people: category I (general work incapacity) – permanent loss of work capacity of more than 80%; and category II (occupational work incapacity) – work capacity is reduced by 50-80%.

Age: For non-work-related incapacity, eligibility depends on the age of the person when the disability began, as follows.

- 45 and over – an insurance period of at least 12 years.
- 38-45 – an insurance period of at least 40% of the time between age 20 (26 for people with university education) and the development of disability (only full years of service being considered).
- 30-37 – an insurance period of at least 30% of the time between age 20 (26 for people with university education) and the development of disability (only full years of service being considered).
- Under 30 – a pension insurance period of at least 12 months.
- Under 25 – pension insurance period of at least nine months.
- Under 20 – pension insurance period of at least six months.

Nationality and/or residency: None (i.e. there are no nationality or residency requirements for accessing this benefit⁵).

Waiting period: Up to 50 days from the date of submission of the application.

Contributory history: Different contributory requirements are applied, depending on the age of the claimant. Please see conditions under the above section on age.

Level of financial resources: None (i.e. the benefit is not means-tested).

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: Medical assessment of the person with disability, and a review of the existing medical documentation.

Responsible authorities: Pension and Disability Insurance Fund of North Macedonia.

Method: Medical assessment of the severity of the health condition, including an assessment of work capacity. An obligatory control by a special commission for work capacity is performed a year after the first assessment (and no more than twice up to age 65) in order to reassess the degree of disability. After that the pension becomes permanent. Failure to comply with this obligation results in suspension of the disability pension. Such a control, however, is not applicable in cases where, due to the type of disease, no improvement in work capacity is possible. A review can also be conducted at any time at the request of the beneficiary, employer, pension fund, or commission for work capacity, if there has been a change in the degree of disability. An **obstacle** in this respect occurs if the control examination establishes that the person is fit for work, contrary to the initial assessment: people whose work capacity has become reduced and who have received a temporary disability pension face a big challenge, since they cannot return to their previous job (as it has already been terminated) and they need to return the money paid through the disability pension prior to the control examination.

Supporting evidence: Applications to the centre for social work are accompanied by a completed form ("Proposal for medical expertise with findings and opinion on the health condition and working ability of the insured") certified by a family doctor, with medical documentation attached (in its original form or photocopied) certified by the centre for social work.

Assessor: Commission for assessment of work capacity established within the Pension and Disability Insurance Fund of North Macedonia.

Decision-maker: Pension and Disability Insurance Fund of North Macedonia.

Critical analysis: Not documented.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: The highest disability pension is 78% of the pension basis, but only for employment injuries and occupational diseases. The minimum disability pension is 36% of the pension basis (for men) and 41% of the pension basis (for women). The actual pension is determined according to the individual's working period.

Disability pension recipients with a general incapacity to work (category I) prior to the age of 62 (women) and 64 (men) are also entitled to a *Инвалидски додаток* (disability supplement) if the disability pension is less than 78% of the reference earnings. The disability supplement constitutes part of the disability pension.

⁵ These conditions apply to EU and non-EU nationals as well as to people with refugee status.

The disability supplement equals:

- 10% of the amount of the disability pension if work incapacity is 80%;
- 15% if it is 90%; and
- 20% if it is 100%.

Second-pillar (mandatory fully funded) pension: If the pension calculated for a member of a pension fund is higher than or equal to the calculated amount of a first-pillar disability pension, they may, instead of the latter, use the whole amount of accumulated assets in their account to pay themselves a pension – through either an annuity, programmed withdrawals, or temporary programmed withdrawals combined with a lifelong deferred annuity.

Duration of the benefit: The disability pension is paid until there is a relevant change in circumstances.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: The disability pension may be cumulated with the allowance for assistance and care from another person and with the disability allowance. The disability pension is terminated if the person receives earnings from employment/self-employment.

Challenges: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.1.2 Боречко-инвалидска заштита (Benefits related to military service or war)

There are several disability-related benefits targeted at war veterans, members of the security forces of the Republic of North Macedonia, members of their families and the families of deceased veterans. There is no publicly available research and evidence related to access issues or adequacy challenges related to these benefits. Based on the Law on War Veterans, members of their families and family members of fallen fighters (Official Gazette, No 13/96), these benefits include the following.

1.1.2.1 Лична инвалиднина (Personal disability allowance)

a) Eligibility conditions

Disability-related qualifying criteria: For rights to the *Лична инвалиднина* (personal disability allowance), war veterans are categorised according to 10 disability groups, according to the degree of disability.

Age: None (i.e. there are no age requirements for accessing this benefit).

Nationality and/or residency: The personal disability allowance is payable to nationals of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Waiting period: The allowance is paid from the first day of the next month after the eligibility criteria have been met.

Contributory history: None (i.e. no minimum contributory record is required).

Level of financial resources: None (i.e. the benefit is not means-tested).

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: Medical examination, and an assessment of medical documentation.

Responsible authorities: Medical commission.

Method: According to the list of percentages of war-related disability (Official Gazette, No 13/96).

Supporting evidence: Medical documentation.

Assessor: War disability is determined on the basis of the findings and opinion of the medical commission, composed of three doctors with specialist knowledge.

Decision-maker: Republic Administrative Body for War Veterans and War Invalids, Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Critical analysis: Not documented.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: The level of the personal disability allowance is based on the degree of disability, as follows: group I – 1.8 times the current average monthly salary; group II – 73%; group III – 55%; group IV – 40%; group V – 30%; group VI – 20%; group VII – 15%; group VIII – 12%; group IX – 10%; and group X – 8%.

Duration of the benefit: The benefit is paid until there is a relevant change in circumstances.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: The personal disability allowance can be combined with the *Додаток за нега и помош од друго лице* (supplement for care and assistance by another person).

Challenges: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.1.2.2 Семејна инвалиднина и зголемена семејна инвалиднина (Family disability allowance and increased family disability allowance)

a) Eligibility conditions

Disability-related qualifying criteria: *Семејна инвалиднина и зголемена семејна инвалиднина* (family disability allowance and increased family disability allowance) is a compensation payment to a family for a lost family member, as well as for living with, and taking care of, a war veteran until their death. The following have the right to claim family disability: members of the immediate family of a fallen fighter; members of the immediate family of a person in disability groups I-VII, after their death; and members of the immediate family of a person who has died as a result of a wound, injury or illness acquired under the circumstances set out in Article 11 of the Law on the Rights of War Veterans.

Age: None (i.e. there are no age requirements for accessing this benefit).

Nationality and/or residency: Payable to nationals of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Waiting period: The allowance is paid from the first day of the next month after the eligibility criteria have been met.

Contributory history: None (i.e. no minimum contributory record is required).

Level of financial resources: None (i.e. the benefit is not means-tested).

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: None.

Responsible authorities: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Method: Assessment of the application documents.

Supporting evidence: Certificate confirming that the spouse, parent or child was a war beneficiary with disabilities; birth certificate; marriage certificate; death certificate; proof of citizenship.

Assessor: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Decision-maker: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Critical analysis: Not documented.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: The level of the family disability allowance is 8% of the monthly personal disability allowance of a war veteran in group 1, and the level of the increased family disability allowance is 40% of it.

Duration of the benefit: The benefit is paid until there is a relevant change in circumstances.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: It can be combined with the disability supplement.

Challenges: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.1.2.3 Инвалидски додаток (Disability supplement)

a) Eligibility conditions

Disability-related qualifying criteria: War veterans with disabilities and beneficiaries of the family disability allowance.

Age: None (i.e. there are no age requirements for accessing this benefit).

Nationality and/or residency: Payable to nationals of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Waiting period: None (i.e. it is granted from the moment the eligibility criteria have been met).

Contributory history: None (i.e. no minimum contributory record is required).

Level of financial resources: The disability supplement can be claimed by a war veteran with disabilities, and by a beneficiary of the family disability allowance, if their monthly family income is not higher than 19% of the current average monthly salary.

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: Administrative assessment.

Responsible authorities: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Method: Assessment of the application documents.

Supporting evidence: The decision determining status as a war veteran with disabilities, and as a beneficiary of the family disability allowance; certificate from the Public Revenue Office in relation to household income; certificate from the Employment Agency; confirmation from Pension and Disability and Insurance Fund that the applicant is a pension beneficiary; and school certificates for children if they are co-beneficiaries.

Assessor: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Decision-maker: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Critical analysis: Not documented.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: For war veterans in groups I-V, the supplement is 10% of the current average monthly salary. For those in groups VI-X and beneficiaries of the family disability allowance, it is 20%. The supplement is reduced by 30% for beneficiaries who have other income. It is increased by 40% for each further member of the family who is a beneficiary of the family disability allowance.

Duration of the benefit: The benefit is paid until there is a relevant change in circumstances.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: The supplements can be combined with the personal disability allowance and the family disability allowance.

Challenges: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.1.2.4 Додаток за нега и помош од друго лице (Supplement for care and assistance by another person)**a) Eligibility conditions**

Disability-related qualifying criteria: Those eligible for the right to a supplement for care and assistance by another person include: war veterans in group I; war veterans in groups II-X for whom damage to the organism occurred independently of the disability, but which combined with it would place them in group I; beneficiaries of the family disability allowance; and beneficiaries of the disability supplement whose disability level is equal to group I.

Age: None (i.e. there are no age requirements for accessing this benefit).

Nationality and/or residency: Payable to nationals of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Waiting period: There is no formal waiting period. The waiting period depends on the availability of an appointment with the medical commission, and the time taken for a decision to be made.

Contributory history: None (i.e. no minimum contributory record is required).

Level of financial resources: None (i.e. the benefit is not means-tested).

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: Medical assessment of the person with disability, and a review of the existing medical documentation.

Responsible authorities: The medical commission, composed of three doctors with specialist knowledge.

Method: Dependency is assessed by reference to the capacity of people to perform autonomously the essential ADL – housekeeping, moving around in the home, mobility and personal hygiene – by means of specific evaluations, in particular on the basis of the ICF of the World Health Organization and the Barthel ADL index.

Supporting evidence: Certificate of war/military disability; opinion of the medical commission.

Assessor: Medical commission for assessment of people eligible under the Law for People with Disabilities from the War and their Families.

Decision-maker: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Critical analysis: Not documented.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: The level of the supplement is: 100% of the monthly personal disability allowance of a war veteran in group I (first degree); 66% (second degree); 46% (third degree); or 20% (fourth degree).

Duration of the benefit: The benefit is paid until there is a relevant change in circumstances.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: The supplement can be combined with the personal disability allowance, disability supplement and family disability allowance.

Challenges: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.1.2.5 Ортопедски додаток (Orthopaedic allowance)**a) Eligibility conditions**

Disability-related qualifying criteria: The *Ортопедски додаток* (orthopaedic allowance) can be claimed by war veterans in groups I-VI whose disability is the direct consequence of a wound, injury or disease that caused amputation of the limb or severe damage to limb function and complete loss of vision.

Age: None (i.e. there are no age requirements for accessing this benefit).

Nationality and/or residency: Payable to nationals of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Waiting period: None (i.e. it is granted from the moment the eligibility criteria have been met).

Contributory history: None (i.e. no minimum contributory record is required).

Level of financial resources: None (i.e. the benefit is not means-tested).

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: Administrative assessment.

Responsible authorities: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Method: Assessment according to the rulebook on medical indicators for categorising people with disabilities from the war according to the degree of the damage of the body, for the purposes of acquiring the orthopaedic allowance (Official Gazette, No 13/96).

Supporting evidence: Medical documentation.

Assessor: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Decision-maker: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy.

Critical analysis: Not documented.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: The allowance is 29% of the monthly personal disability allowance of a war veteran in group I (first degree); 22% (second degree); 14% (third degree); or 7% (fourth degree).

Duration of the benefit: The benefit is paid until there is a relevant change in circumstances.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: It can be combined with the personal disability allowance.

The Law for Civilians Injured During a War (Official Gazette, No 161/2009) also provides benefits for civilians injured during a war. They include two benefits, presented under Section 1.1.2.6 and Section 1.1.2.7 below.

Challenges: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.1.2.6 Цивилна инвалиднина (Civil disability allowance)

a) Eligibility conditions

Disability-related qualifying criteria: People with disabilities resulting from a civil war are eligible for the *Цивилна инвалиднина* (civil disability allowance), according to the degree of disability, regardless of their family income. They are divided into the following groups: group I (100% disability); group II (90%); group III (80%); group IV (70%); group V (60%).

Age: None (i.e. there are no age requirements for accessing this benefit).

Nationality and/or residency: Payable to nationals of the Republic of North Macedonia.

Waiting period: None (i.e. it is granted from the moment the eligibility criteria have been met).

Contributory history: None (i.e. no minimum contributory record is required).

Level of financial resources: None (i.e. the benefit is not means-tested).

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: Please see Section 1.1.2.1.

Responsible authorities: Please see Section 1.1.2.1.

Method: Please see Section 1.1.2.1.

Supporting evidence: Please see Section 1.1.2.1.

Assessor: Please see Section 1.1.2.1.

Decision-maker: Please see Section 1.1.2.1.

Critical analysis: Not documented.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: For those in group 1, the allowance is MKD 36,126 (€587) per month; for group II, it is 73% of it; for group III, 55%; for group IV, 40%; for group V, it is 30%.

Duration of the benefit: The benefit is paid until there is a relevant change in circumstances.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: It can be combined with the supplement for care and assistance by another person.

Challenges: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.1.2.7 Додаток за нега и помош од друго лице (Supplement for care and assistance by another person)

Civilians with disabilities from the war can claim the supplement for care and assistance by another person, under conditions determined by the regulations for war veterans with disabilities.

a) Eligibility conditions

Disability-related qualifying criteria: Please see detailed conditions provided in Section 1.1.2.4.

Age: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Nationality and/or residency: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Waiting period: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Contributory history: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Level of financial resources: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Other: None.

Gaps/obstacles: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on gaps/obstacles related to this benefit.

b) Disability assessment framework

Type of assessment: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Responsible authorities: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Method: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Supporting evidence: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Assessor: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Decision-maker: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Critical analysis: Not documented.

c) Benefit entitlements

Level of the benefit: Equal to the supplement for war veterans with disabilities.

Duration of the benefit: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Interactions with other income or other related benefits: Please see Section 1.1.2.4.

Challenges: No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.2 Disability-specific old-age pension schemes

There is no disability-specific old-age pension scheme in North Macedonia.

1.3 Income support aimed at covering disability-related healthcare and housing expenses

Apart from income support from the social protection system mentioned in Section 1.1.1. (i.e. the disability pension, disability allowance, and allowance for assistance and care from another person) which covers the specific needs of people with disabilities, there are no cash benefits for healthcare and housing expenses targeted specifically at people with disabilities. There are no benefits aimed at covering disability-related expenses. This section therefore maps other important support mechanisms for healthcare and housing covering broader groups, including people with disabilities.

1.3.1 Healthcare

1.3.1.1 *Право на здравствена заштита (Right to health protection)*

a) Brief description

The *Право на здравствена заштита* (right to [free] health protection) derives from the Law on Social Protection, and is provided to different groups of social protection beneficiaries, including beneficiaries of the disability allowance, and of the allowance for assistance and care from another person.

b) Main gaps/obstacles

According to research by the NGO PORAKA (2021), the main complaint of the parents of people with intellectual disabilities is the fact that the Law on Health Insurance currently only exempts people with intellectual disability from co-payment for healthcare services up to age 26.

c) Main adequacy challenges

No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.3.1.2 *Право на ослободување од плаќање партиципација за здравствено услуги и лекови (Fee waiver for health services and medicines)*

a) Brief description

Insured people are obliged to make co-payments for the use of health services and medicines. However, there are exemptions for certain groups, including beneficiaries of the disability allowance, and people with disabilities from the war and their families. These exemptions do not cover the cost of drugs in primary healthcare, treatment abroad, and orthopaedic and other devices. For orthopaedic and other devices for insured people, in accordance with the medical indicators, the cost is borne by the Health Insurance Fund; people can procure them from pharmacies and orthopaedic houses with which the fund has concluded an agreement.

b) Main gaps/obstacles

People with intellectual disability over 26 cannot obtain the *Право на ослободување од плаќање партиципација за здравствено услуги и лекови* (fee waiver for health services and medicines). The Law on Health Insurance only exempts from co-payments people with intellectual disability who are 26 or under.

c) Main adequacy challenges

No evidence (reports, papers...) was identified on adequacy challenges related to this benefit.

1.3.2 Housing

Specific support and allowances targeted exclusively at home adaptations are not available for people with disabilities in North Macedonia. The sub-section below describes the *Додаток за домување* (housing allowance), which is part of the social assistance scheme and which may be used for the purpose of home adaptations.

1.3.2.1 *Додаток за домување (Housing allowance)*

a) Brief description

Housing allowance is a non-contributory means-tested benefit, provided to people in financial and housing insecurity. These include: beneficiaries of the GMA; and people who up to age 18 had the status of a child without parents and without parental care (i.e. after the termination of guardianship), up to age 26. People with disabilities are therefore entitled to housing allowance if they receive the GMA. The level of the housing

allowance is set by local municipalities, and its entitlement and amount may differ dependent on the fiscal capacity of the municipality.

b) Main gaps/obstacles

As this is a means-tested benefit, it is only available to beneficiaries of the GMA, and is not accessible to those above the minimum income threshold. As the housing allowance is paid at the municipal level, both entitlement conditions and amounts may also differ dependent on the fiscal capacity of the municipality.

c) Main adequacy challenges

The housing allowance is not tailor-made for the specific needs of people with disabilities. Its provision and amount are conditional on the financial capacity of the municipality where the applicants live. This potentially creates regional imbalances in the availability and generosity of social protection provision for people with disabilities.

2 Access to some key general social protection cash benefits

This section describes the situation regarding access by people with disabilities to social protection benefits for risks other than disability, focusing on eligibility conditions, disability assessment and entitlement to benefits.

2.1 Old-age benefits

2.1.1 *Старосна пензија* (Old-age pension)

a) Eligibility conditions

The scheme does not have different eligibility conditions for old people with disabilities. Insured people acquire the right to the *Старосна пензија* (old-age pension) when they reach 64 (men), or 62 (women), and have at least 15 years of pensionable service. Deferment is possible up to age 67.

b) Additional amount/compensation included and adequacy issues

There is no additional compensation included. There is no evidence (reports, papers...) on adequacy issues related to this benefit.

c) Gaps/obstacles

Apart from the conditions related to age and contributory record, there are no available data suggesting gaps and obstacles in access to the old-age pension. However, it can be presumed that most people with disabilities claim either the disability pension or the *Семејна пензија* (family pension).

2.1.2 *Семејна пензија* (Family pension)

a) Eligibility conditions

The scheme does not have different eligibility conditions for old people with disabilities. Family members are entitled to a family pension upon fulfilment of the general and special conditions. If the death of the insured person occurred as a result of an injury at work or an occupational disease, family members are entitled to a family pension, regardless of the length of the insured person's retirement. If the death of the insured person was not related to an injury at work or an occupational disease, family members are entitled to a family pension if the insured person: had at least five years of insurance service, at least 10 years of pension service, met the requirements for the old-age or disability pension, or had received the old-age or disability pension.

b) Additional amount/compensation included and adequacy issues

There is no additional compensation included. There is no available evidence (reports, papers...) on adequacy issues related to this benefit.

c) Gaps/obstacles

Until 2018 people with disabilities could not claim the family pension. In 2018 changes to the Law for Pension Insurance gave the right to the family pension to people with disabilities who have a contributory record.

2.2 Unemployment benefits**2.2.1 Паричен надоместок во случај на невработеност (Unemployment compensation)****a) Eligibility conditions**

The scheme does not have different eligibility conditions for old people with disabilities. The *Паричен надоместок во случај на невработеност* (unemployment compensation) is a contributory right, under the social insurance scheme. The compensation is paid from the first day following termination of employment, if the person files a claim with the Employment Agency within 30 days.

b) Additional amount/compensation included and adequacy issues

No additional amount/compensation for people with disabilities. There is no evidence (reports, papers...) on adequacy issues related to this benefit.

c) Gaps/obstacles

The main obstacle to accessing unemployment compensation concerns all unemployed people (not only people with disabilities), and relates to cases where the employment contract was terminated by mutual agreement with the employer.

2.3 Guaranteed minimum income schemes and other social assistance benefits**2.3.1 Гарантирана минимална помош (Guaranteed minimum assistance)****a) Eligibility conditions**

The GMA is a non-contributory, tax-financed benefit under the social protection system. It is provided to households that are financially insecure and do not have property rights. According to the Law on Social Protection, financially insecure households are those whose total average income per member in the three months (one month in cases of natural disasters and emergencies) before submitting a claim and during receipt of the assistance is lower than the GMA.

b) Additional amount/compensation included and adequacy issues

The *Гарантирана минимална помош* can be topped up with disability allowance and with the heating allowance. In addition, disability allowances are not taken into account for the purposes of GMA means-testing.

c) Gaps/obstacles

As already indicated in Section 1.1.1, the accessibility of centres for social work, where applications for the GMA are submitted, is not adequate for many people with disabilities. Inaccessible physical infrastructure, and a lack of electronic access for GMA applications, present a serious challenge for people with disabilities, jeopardising their overall living standard.

2.3.2 *Парична помош за социјална сигурност за старите лица (Cash benefit for social security for older people)*

a) Eligibility conditions

The scheme does not have different eligibility conditions for old people with disabilities. This is a non-contributory right, available to people over 65. It was established in 2019 and provides additional protection in old age for people who do not have any pension contributory record.

b) Additional amount/compensation included and adequacy issues

There is no additional compensation for people with disabilities. The *Парична помош за социјална сигурност за старите лица* (cash benefit for social security for older people) is topped up with the heating allowance. There is no evidence (reports, papers...) on adequacy issues related to this benefit.

c) Gaps/obstacles

There is no evidence available to assess this.

3 Provision of assistive technology and personal assistance

Assistive technology is not easily accessible for people with disabilities. It is mainly available within the educational system (primary, secondary, vocational, higher education). Due to the pandemic, support for the use of assistive technology increased in 2020 and 2021. By mid-2021, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, together with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), promoted the digital application "Kiko" (an audio reader), designed to facilitate the communication and functioning of blind people. The application is free and can be used without internet support. Other support related to assistive technology was provided through the Ministry of Educational and Science (i.e. how to customise teaching materials for students with disabilities⁶), the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, the United Nations Children's Fund, the NGO Open the Windows (i.e. online service support⁷), the UNDP (i.e. educational assistants⁸), and various other donors and service-providers. However, recent research on social services at the local level shows that municipalities need greater support in improving access to assistive technology in various institutions that people with special needs frequently access, as well as the need to install sound traffic lights (for blind people), sign language interpreters (for deaf people), elevators, conveyor belts and similar aids (Petreski, M. *et al.*, 2020).

Personal assistance was instituted by the Law on Social Protection, adopted in 2019. According to the rulebook for personal assistance (Official Gazette, No 264/2019), it is provided to people with reduced functional capacity, aged 6-64, in order to enable their independent living and active and equal participation in the community. Beneficiaries of personal assistance are people with severe and profound physical disability or completely blind people, who cannot independently perform daily and instrumental activities due to the disability. A claim for personal assistance is submitted to the centre for social work, which reimburses the cost of the service. The personal assistance can be delivered in the home of the user, and in centres for rehabilitation, etc. It can be used by people who do not have a contract for lifetime support. Users of personal assistance cannot at the same time use the help and care service at home. The personal assistance service is provided for up to 80 hours per month, providing individual assistance and support.

Personal assistance services can be provided by a public or private institution, or association, with an appropriate license. The service-user selects a personal assistant from the list of those available kept by the authorised service-provider to which they are referred

⁶ Eduino: <http://www.eduino.gov.mk/nastava/upatstva/>.

⁷ Online service support: <https://otw.assistive.mk>.

⁸ UNDP: <https://www.mk.undp.org/content/north-macedonia/en/home/library/poverty/Educational-and-Personal-Assistants.html>.

(i.e. from the records of people who provide a personal assistance service as a professional activity, managed by the centre for social work).

According to the Public Institute for Social Affairs, providers of personal assistance believe that this type of service should be continuously developed and expanded in other cities, and that greater promotion of the service is needed in order to inform potential customers and personal assistants. Also, they believe that there is a need for continuous support and additional training for personal assistants, as well as regulation of their employment status (Public Institute for Social Affairs, 2021).

4 National debates, reforms and recommendations

4.1 National debates

Access to social protection for people with disabilities is only occasionally part of the national debate, mainly before concrete amendments of the social protection legislation or wider social protection reform. For example, before the adoption of the new Law on Social Protection in 2019, there were numerous public debates (parliamentary discussions, media reports) related to how the new reformed rights would affect access by people with disabilities to social protection benefits. Although not systematic, such debates contribute to raising awareness about the existing challenges in access to social protection system faced by (specific groups of) people with disabilities, and often lead to improvements in their treatment. Adequacy issues are also part of these occasional debates, particularly in relation to policy initiatives to increase the take-up of social services for people with disabilities as a substitute for disability allowances.

4.2 Recent reforms and reforms currently in the pipeline

The social protection reform initiated in early 2017, and adopted in June 2019, included a new Law on Social Protection, amendments to the Law for Child Protection, and a new Law on Social Security for Older People. As part of this reform process, important changes included: removing the income-test for disability benefits (i.e. the disability allowance and the allowance for assistance and care from another person); disregarding disability allowances when calculating the values of other benefits; and an overall simplification of the application process. However, other important laws that deal with the rights of people with disabilities (i.e. the Law on Employment of People with Disabilities, and the Law on Pension and Disability Insurance) have not been reformed, thus hindering a more holistic improvement of the legal treatment of people with disabilities.

In 2018, the government decided to establish a National Co-ordination Body for Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) (Official Gazette, No 69/2018). The new body co-ordinates the activities of the ministries and institutions under its jurisdiction with respect to the principles of the UN CRPD. It co-operates with people with disabilities and their representative organisations. It also proposes and submits opinions on laws and by-laws in accordance with the principles of the UN CRPD.

Other recent reforms relating to people with disability include: the introduction of a new assessment model based on the ICF; and expanding community-based services to provide families with support⁹.

According to the programme for social protection for 2022, there is a plan to increase the disability allowance by 15% in 2022. However, organisations representing people with disabilities are calling for a much higher increase, of 70%, with a view to equalising the

⁹ UNICEF: <https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/press-releases/we-reimagine-better-future-every-child-we-must-not-leave-children-disabilities>.

disability allowance with the minimum wage in the near future. In addition, they require a removal of the age limit of 65 on the disability allowance and the allowance for assistance and care from another person¹⁰.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, disability assessment during 2020-2021 was conducted solely on the bases of medical documentation, and without the individual assessment of the person with disabilities.

4.3 Good practices and recommendations on how to tackle gaps and obstacles

There are no good (evidence-based) practices related to help for people with disabilities to access effectively social protection benefits and services in North Macedonia. On the other hand, there is good practice in the area of improving access for other vulnerable groups (i.e. Roma), which can be modified and adapted for people with disabilities.

Recommendations to tackle gaps and obstacles in social protection are as follows.

- Enhance research and statistics on disability and people with disabilities, in line with Article 31 of the UN CPRD.
- Remove the age limit of 65 on access to the disability allowance and the allowance for assistance and care from another person, in order to improve access to social protection benefits among older people with disabilities.
- Improve the physical accessibility of all centres for social work, as well as electronic access for people with disabilities (blind, deaf, physical disability, etc.).
- Use good practice in the field of social protection targeting other vulnerable groups (i.e. Roma health mediators) and tailor them to the needs of people with disabilities.
- Increase and prioritise the number of appointment slots (using the software system "Мож Термин"/"My appointment-lot") for disability assessments.

¹⁰ People with disabilities require higher allowances: <https://vistinomer.mk/licata-so-poprechenost-baraat-povisoki-dodatoci-kje-dobijat-15-otstotno-zgolemuvanje-idnata-godina/>.

References

Government of North Macedonia, Decision for establishment of a National Co-ordination Body for Implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Official Gazette, No 69/2018).

Law for Civilians Injured During a War (Official Gazette, No 161/2009).

Law on Social Protection (Official Gazette, No 104/19).

Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Programme for Social Protection for 2022 (in Macedonian). Available at: https://www.mtsp.gov.mk/content/pdf/2022/Programa_ostvaruvanje_szastita_2022.pdf.

Rulebook for Personal Assistance (Official Gazette, No 264/2019).

Petreski, M., Tumanoska, D and Petreski, B., 2020. Social services in the municipalities in North Macedonia: capacity, risks, needs, Skopje: Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Finance Think.

PORAKA, 2021. Report on the progress of implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability, Skopje: PORAKA (in Macedonian). Available at: <http://poraka.org.mk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Izvestaj-10-godini-potoa-FINAL-web.pdf>.

Public Institute for Social Affairs, 2021. Report on use of personal assistance for people with disabilities in 2020 (in Macedonian).

Getting in touch with the EU

In person

All over the European Union there are hundreds of Europe Direct Information Centres. You can find the address of the centre nearest you at: <http://europa.eu/contact>

On the phone or by e-mail

Europe Direct is a service that answers your questions about the European Union. You can contact this service

- by freephone: 00 800 6 7 8 9 10 11 (certain operators may charge for these calls),
- at the following standard number: +32 22999696 or
- by electronic mail via: <http://europa.eu/contact>

Finding information about the EU

Online

Information about the European Union in all the official languages of the EU is available on the Europa website at: <http://europa.eu>

EU Publications

You can download or order free and priced EU publications from EU Bookshop at: <http://bookshop.europa.eu>. Multiple copies of free publications may be obtained by contacting Europe Direct or your local information centre (see <http://europa.eu/contact>)

EU law and related documents

For access to legal information from the EU, including all EU law since 1951 in all the official language versions, go to EUR-Lex at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu>

Open data from the EU

The EU Open Data Portal (<http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data>) provides access to datasets from the EU. Data can be downloaded and reused for free, both for commercial and non-commercial purposes.

